



Paul's and the Position of Women in Worship Service: Study of 1 Timothy 2:8-15

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ABSTRACT

The dichotomy that is often debated is patriarchal and feminist cultural systems. The centralization of human life is largely directed towards men, both in social and religious circles, thereby encouraging the objectification of women and dominating them. The space for women seems to be closed, this also happens in the Christian sphere, where there are still churches that adhere to a literal interpretation of the Bible. As a result, the reading of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 is misinterpreted. The main aim of this research is to reconstruct and present egalitarianization between women and men based on 1 Timothy 2:8-15, especially in the scope of worship services. It is still found that some churches reject women as priests. This research uses qualitative methods, with a critical historical approach. The results show that the Ephesian women were contaminated with a life of debauchery or a luxurious lifestyle, wanting to appear beyond their capacity. So they tend to ignore Christian values. So, it cannot be a measure to reject the existence of women as ministers of worship (pastor), only the church needs to pay attention to Christian values and foster them in Indonesia context.

Keywords: Paul's Authority; Women; Worship Service; 1 Timothy 2:8-15

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INTRODUCTION

Anthropology is the teaching about humans; this term has a theological and scientific meaning. Theological anthropology, looks at humans and their relationship with God, scientific anthropology looks at psychophysical organisms and the natural history of humans (Thiessen, 2010, p. 229). In the explanation above there are two statements of a scientific and theological nature. At present, we can analyze Biblical texts that talk about humans, both at the time of creation and in subsequent periods of development. Now researchers are interpreting men and women in 1 Timothy and also looking at concepts from other books related to gender (Judges 16:4-22; Ezekiel 23; Ruth 4). For example in Genesis 2:18, the term 'helper' is interpreted as if a woman had always been inferior to a man so that women's submission was required (Budiman, 2016, p. 23). Finally, the Bible says that a woman must submit to a man or a wife to her husband so that the husband has authority over him (Ephesus 5:22-24). The role of women continues to be controversial; there are pros and cons to women's freedom to take on leadership roles in the secular world (Wijaya, 2017, pp. 104–105). Pro parties, of course, do not question gender issues, even in the world of service. These things will be opposed by parties who are against women's freedom.

In Ephesus, men were those who had the function of teaching in the congregation. In church meetings, women had to remain silent, because they were not permitted to speak. If they want to know something, they have to finish the meeting and ask their husband at home, because it is not polite for women to speak in a meeting (Budiman, 2016, p. 23). In this case, Paul emphasized the reasons to the women in Ephesus on how women should behave in worship. It was the authoritative nature of an apostle to advise with his letter to Timothy, directed to the men and women of Ephesus. As a result, it appears that women were in a submissive position, but actually, Paul was paying attention to them.

A glance at the situation in Ephesus and Timothy's pastorate based on Paul's command in the letter 1 Timothy, when talking about today, many churches still crudely apply what is written in 1 Timothy 2:8-15, where women are not allowed to speak in worship and must submit obediently to her husband. There is an example of a church in Alor Regency, Alor Baru, NTT, where they forbid women from wearing short clothes and dressing appropriately. Looking at the current situation in Indonesia, rape is also rampant among men, so the government as a leader implements rules and regulations that protect women from rape so that justice is upheld (Makanata, 2018, p. 11). Not only was the law passed, but there was a special body that was formed as a result of the violence that occurred in 1998 against ethnic Chinese. The name of this body is KOMNAS Perempuan. Some laws regulate the protection of women, such as the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Number 7 of 1999 concerning the Ratification of the Convention regarding the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. And also the

problem of prostitution or commercial sex workers, which the government is trying to eradicate, regarding both women and men (Alhakim, 2021).

There have been several previous studies, conducting studies regarding the situation of the church in Ephesus based on 1 Timothy 2:8-15. First, research from Philip H. Towner (2021) entitled *Resonance, Dissonance, Resistance and 1 Timothy 2.8-15: The Eschatological Obsolescence and "Rewriting" of a Proscriptive Text*, he said that the text of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 talks about men and women, but focuses more on women in the public (even ecclesiastical) sphere. He highlighted that the text describes women's disobedience and frequent extravagance in their rich lives. Intertextually, this text talks about divine restoration through the female body and how the divine promise is fulfilled in His solidarity with humans. *Second*, research from Johnatan Jodamus (2022) with the title *(Con)texturing Ideologies of Modesty, Authority, and Childbearing in 1 Timothy 2:8–15*, he discusses how contemporary studies continue to show attitudes of subordination between women and men. This claim comes from an ideological belief that God created the disparity between men and women. He tries to return the aspect of interpretation to an egalitarian one that does not bring down each other, this shows that there is a need for biblical evaluation in the interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:8-15. *Third*, research conducted by James Reiher (2023) with the title *Is There Anything More that Can Be Said about 1 Timothy 2:8–15? "Propriety," A Surprisingly Significant Word*, tries to emphasize the word "*sōphrosunē*" which means the education and ministry training carried out by Paul to the Ephesian women. Paul was to help newly converted women teach correctly and sensibly. The novelty of this article compared to previous studies is that it provides a comprehensive analysis of Paul's apostolic authority and the urgency of women's position in worship services based on 1 Timothy 2:8-15, all within the context of the current Indonesian church. By considering the historical and cultural background, as well as theological reflections, this research offers a fresh perspective on achieving egalitarianism between men and women in worship.

From the explanation above based on the title Paul's apostolic rights and the urgency of women's position in worship based on 1 Timothy 2:8-15, the researcher will discuss the historical and cultural context that led Paul to address the issue of women's roles and positions in worship in Ephesus, and how his teachings in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 can be interpreted and applied appropriately in the context of the Indonesian church today to promote egalitarianism between men and women? Based on the background that has been stated above, the researcher wants to know more deeply about the issue of women's position in 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Thus, the researcher uses this article to find out the problems that arose in the situation in Ephesus, so that women were in a position of urgency and Paul had the authority based on his apostolic right to regulate and govern women through the shepherding of Timothy.

METHOD

The research method that is relevant to this research is the qualitative method of literature study approach based on the rules of interpretation of Historical-Critical Hermeneutics. Research using a library study approach emphasizes the interpretation and analysis of what has been written, such as books, magazines, newspapers, letters, diaries and others (Abdussamad, 2021, p. 93). Paul's apostleship and the position of women in worship services: a study of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 which is the subject of this research. Researchers conducted various reviews and various literature, and data analyses using the principles of hermeneutics of the Holy Bible on the issue of Paul's apostolic rights and the urgency of the position of women in worship in Ephesus during the time of the Apostle Paul so that they could interpret and understand it based on the views of supporting experts regarding Paul's apostolic rights and the urgency of their position. women in congregational worship in Ephesus.

There are several critical historical hermeneutical steps that researchers use. First, read repeatedly (cross-reading) the text of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and look at the close context. Second, look at the historical context of the text being studied. Third, make an exegetical study. Fourth, analyze data and findings using adequate interpretive books and references (Nainggolan, 2020, p. 66). After that, the researcher will conclude and make them relevant in today's life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Author of 1 Timothy

In general, 1 Timothy is a letter written by Paul. However, when looking at the contents and how the church developed in this letter, New Testament experts doubt that it was Paul who wrote this letter. There are nine arguments of denial presented by Benjamin Hakh, but the researcher selects five as the most significant to address the research focus. First, the perception of the church diverges, with the Pastoral Letters depicting a church whose completeness continues to evolve, unlike Paul's portrayal. Second, the mission of the church shifts; Paul's letters emphasize an expansive mission directed towards non-Jews, whereas the Pastoral letters adopt a defensive stance. Third, there's a disparity in the understanding of church leadership; Paul presents charismatic leadership, contrasting with the institutional view in the Pastoral letters. Fourth, the image of the church varies; Paul describes it as the body of Christ, while the Pastoral letters liken it to a fortress. Last, the emphasis on the parousia differs; while Paul stresses its significance as news, it receives less emphasis in the Pastoral letters. These discrepancies, among others, raise doubts about Paul's authorship, suggesting his name might have been used rather than him being the actual author (Hakh, 2010, pp. 243–246).

However, according to Daniel and Howard, the author is Paul himself. They assume and have strong arguments against the author of this letter, namely that it is clearly seen in this letter how he travelled, describing his circumstances in detail (Arichea & Hatton, 2004). In 1 Timothy Paul also tells of his journey to Macedonia.

Brown (2016) presents seven arguments challenging Paul's authorship of 1 Timothy. First, linguistic analysis reveals deviations from Paul's established style, indicating a less distinctive vocabulary and sentence structure. Second, a theological and ethical comparison with Paul's known writings suggests nuanced shifts in theological terms, implying an evolving thought process. Third, historical discrepancies between Paul's life and the events described in 1 Timothy cast doubt on its authorship. Fourth, the late placement of 1 Timothy raises questions about its absence from certain early church canons, suggesting possible rejection. Fifth, the attribution of false teachings lacks concrete evidence, complicating the understanding of post-Pauline theological developments. Sixth, the advanced church structure described in 1 Timothy contrasts with expectations for Paul's time, yet lacks sufficient detail for a full understanding. Seventh, structural similarities with other works like the *Didache* hint at variations in church organizational development (Brown, 2016, pp. 243–244).

Paul wrote on his behalf in his letters relating to Romans, Ephesians, and the Pastoral Epistles. In the letter to the Galatians, the writing not only goes under Paul's name but also features companions without mentioning their names. Sosthenes is mentioned with Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:1, while Timothy is mentioned in 2 Corinthians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:1, and Philemon 1, while Silvanus and Timothy together are mentioned in 1 and 2 Thessalonians 1: 1. The placement of these names at the beginning of the letter indicates a difference from those mentioned at the end of the letter. Although some of the salutors may have contributed to the writing, Sosthenes, Timothy, and Silvanus appear to have been Paul's co-authors (Prior, 1989, p. 38).

Place and Time of Writing

The problem of time is very difficult to determine. However, if Paul wrote these pastoral letters, it can be estimated that these letters were written closely before the Apostle's death, namely around 60-64 AD. There is also another estimate, based on the considerations above; it can be estimated that they were written in Ephesus around 100 AD (Hakh, 2010, p. 243).

Traditionally, these letters bear Paul's name as the sender (1 Timothy 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:1; Titus 1:1), leading to their attribution to him. However, scrutiny of their content and portrayal of church development prompts doubts among New Testament scholars regarding their authenticity as Paul's work. Some argue that these letters might not have been penned directly by Paul, but rather by his successors or disciples, drawing upon language and theology developed within the church context. Pinpointing the exact

time and place of their composition remains challenging. If indeed authored by Paul, it is speculated that they were written in Rome, between 60-64 AD, before his death (Tulangouw, 2024, p. 11).

While residing in Ephesus, Paul probably composed 2 Timothy during his second imprisonment in Rome, circa 64-65 AD. Paul's letters are contextualized within the era and his evolving experiences, serving not merely as pastoral correspondence but also as instructional guides for missionaries engaged in spreading the Gospel. These writings embody the ongoing mission as envisioned by Paul during his ministry (AbelInyaregh & Iordaah, 2022, p. 423). Jimoh (2020, p. 180) added that 1 Timothy was written after Paul. Paul likely authored 2 Timothy in late A.D. 67. This conclusion is supported by two main factors: Firstly, early church tradition suggests Paul's execution occurred shortly before Emperor Nero's suicide in June 68 AD. Secondly, Paul's final letter was penned around the time of his sentencing, preceding the winter of 67-68 (Oyetade, 2013, p. 1). Based on the views above, the author agrees that the letter 1 Timothy was written by Paul in the period 64-68 AD in Rome after he was released from prison.

Purpose of the Letter

This letter aims to support Timothy personally and in his ministry, urging him to exemplify faithfulness despite his youth (1 Timothy 4:12). It guides ministry in Ephesus, addressing the need to combat heretical teachings and organize worship services. Additionally, it outlines requirements for elders, overseers, and deacons, emphasizing the importance of their behaviour and warning against greed, a prevalent issue in Ephesus (Tulangouw, 2024, p. 12).

This letter contains 27 clear instructions from Paul to Timothy regarding ministry focus, with eighteen instructions emphasizing the ministry of God's word. Similar to 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy underscores the importance of maintaining sound doctrine and criticizes false teachings. Paul penned 2 Timothy while imprisoned for preaching the Gospel (2 Timothy 2:9) (Ukeachusim, 2022, p. 2). The Pastoral Epistles, particularly 1 Timothy, provide models of principles and practices in ministry. This is evident in three aspects: First, the length of this letter compared to others in the Pastoral Epistles. Second, its proximity in time to the other letters. Third, it offers comprehensive instructions for pastors, both preliminary and detailed. Finally, 1 Timothy delves into apostolic principles crucial for the church of its era. However, its varied and complex development poses a challenge for Bible Institutes (Shelby, 2021, pp. 1–2).

Portrait of the City of Ephesus

The City of Ephesus is one of the best-preserved ancient cities in the Mediterranean. In ancient times, both Greek and Roman, this city was a centre of trade and also the worship

of the god Artemis, the Greek goddess of the hunt and wilderness, and symbolized purity (Nursanty, 2023).

Ephesus, the capital of the province of Asia Minor, held significant importance in Paul's missionary endeavours. Situated in western Asia Minor, it served as a major trading hub akin to Antioch and Alexandria. Ephesus gained prominence following the Roman annexation of western Asia Minor around 133 BC, and it was particularly known for the worship of the goddess Artemis (Latin: *Diana*). In Ephesus, where Timothy resided, the presence of the goddess Aphrodite was notable. Her temples housed numerous sacred prostitutes, enticing worshippers with promises of spiritual and physical gratification akin to sex tourism. These worshippers believed they would find satisfaction through such practices. The prostitutes, adorned with makeup, jewellery, and immodest attire, sought to attract visitors with their appearance (Wicaksono, 2020, p. 82).

Paul called and taught his disciples, encouraged them, and then left for Macedonia. One of the likely but unnamed disciples was Timothy, who is expected to have remained in the Ephesian church as Paul's representative at the time. As Paul continued his missionary journey, he landed in Miletus. There, despite the urge to head straight for Jerusalem, Paul decided to bypass the nearby city of Ephesus to reach Jerusalem in time for Pentecost. Even so, Paul still managed to visit the church leaders in Ephesus to meet with them in Miletus for an emotional and meaningful farewell. Paul's advice includes a strong warning against the possible arrival of false teachers, both from outside and within the Ephesian church. By the time Paul wrote the letter we now know as 1 Timothy, false teachers and their influence had begun to penetrate the Ephesian church. It was time for Timothy and the leaders in Ephesus to take action (Kidson, 2022, pp. 169–173).

1 Timothy 2:8 - Paul's Desire Regarding the Character of Man in the Church

The sentence in this verse begins with, therefore, which probably refers back to the previous verses. Paul had commanded that this prayer be offered for all men because God desired all men to be saved and gave His Son as a ransom for all men (2:1, 4, 6). Since this is true, it is important that prayer be offered. Therefore, says Paul, I will. “Want” (*βουλομαι*) means “to intend, plan, or will” and “contains a message of an authoritative command.” Paul wants them to pray. Paul wants men to pray everywhere, making the commandment universally applicable, wherever the church is located. Paul wanted men to pray in public worship (Wicaksono, 2020). William Hendriksen & Kistemaker (2002) wrote that the main meaning of this advice was that in public worship men, not women, should stand with their hands raised and say their prayers aloud. When men pray, Paul wants them to raise holy hands. When some people read the phrase raising holy hands, they conclude that Paul is referring to a preferred prayer position. I believe that in verse 8, the same desire with “likewise” (*ὁσαυτως*) is addressed to both men and women, indicating Paul's hope that both men and women can pray with raised or stretched

out hands peacefully and without quarrel. In the context of public worship of the New Testament Church, it was apparently common to pray aloud (cf. Acts 4:24-31; see also Ezra 3:12-13). In order for prayer to be acceptable before Him, Paul emphasized the importance that prayer must be offered by individuals whose lives are holy and righteous before God, namely with "holy hands" (Tulangouw, 2024, p. 13).

Most scholars agree it was not Paul's intention to mandate a particular posture for prayer (Towner, 2021; Van Houwelingen, 2019; White, 2022). The most common posture for prayer in ancient times was standing with both hands open and raised and palms facing upwards, this was done by pagans, Jews and Christians. The raised empty hand implies need and dependence on the Creator. Many prayer positions are mentioned in Scripture, including standing (Psalm 27:2), sitting (2 Samuel 7:18), bowing or kneeling (Genesis 17:3), and prostrating on the ground (Number 14:5) with the head bowed (Genesis 24:26) or with the eyes lifted to heaven (John 17:1). Prayer is talking to God. One's body position when praying is not important. The emphasis in the expression "lifting up holy hands" is not on the position of the limbs but on the purity of life. The hand is a part of the body that enables humans to be actors. In the Bible, hands often symbolize what humans do. Paul says that hands raised in prayer must be "holy" hands (Makanata, 2018). Of course, Paul's intention in the letter was not to eliminate women's right to pray in certain places but to encourage men to be ready to pray anywhere. In the eighth verse, Paul wants to complete the paragraph about prayer, namely that prayer is not limited to one particular house of prayer, but people must pray everywhere. Pray anywhere, which means praying in your room, among your family, praying while eating, praying while travelling, and praying in a solemn congregation, whether in public or alone. Indeed, the Jewish habit of praying is a habit of the Jews when praying, but when the prayer is only a formality it will be misleading, so Paul added that it must be with holy hands (Surya, 2020, p. 87). Then it is God's will to raise your hands truly and sincerely, outwardly or decoratively, indicating a sincere request.

In verse 8, which discusses behaviour when praying, there is special emphasis on shaping their behaviour based on certain virtues that reflect self-control and self-mastery. This is also reflected in the emphasis on discipline in dressing in verse nine (Smit, 2022, p. 243). Paul's desire that men pray was not just a simple request, but was a desire based on "the full authority of his apostolic office." Kelly (1987, p. 61). Wrote his verb in a Jewish Hellenistic context reflects an "authoritative command." The word "then" (*ὡσαυτως*, *hosautos*) in the ESV is a conjunction indicating a connection to the previous instruction regarding prayer for all people (2:1), as Larson emphasizes. The phrase "every place" here refers to every worship activity where prayer has an important role (Kidson, 2022, p. 178).

This verse emphasizes the importance of a pure and sincere heart in prayer. Men who pray are expected to do so without anger, pride, or strife. This symbolizes a clean

heart and focus on God, not on yourself or personal problems. Both men and women are encouraged to be active in group prayer, without hierarchy or role restrictions.

1 Timothy 2:9-10 - Paul's Advice to Women Worshiping

In verse 9, Paul focuses on character, so some people will be surprised because his first directive concerns women's clothing in worship. However, the way people dress can tell a lot about their character. Paul had given instructions to men; now, in the same way, he gives guidance to women. He wrote, I want women; dress appropriately, politely and simply, don't have braids in your hair, don't wear gold, pearls or expensive clothes. "Women" is the plural of *γυνή* (*gunē*), which refers to "an adult woman". Paul did not say, "I want women to wear proper clothing." Instead he said, "I want women to adorn themselves with appropriate clothing." To make up or adorn is defined as "to cause something to have an attractive appearance by means of decoration." The word "proper" in the expression comes from the same root. In the past, the term "woman" (*gune*) often referred to a married woman who might be a thirty-five year old grandmother or even a fifteen year old mother who had just given birth to her first child (with a husband who might be five to three twenty years older than him)." Recognizing the definition of *γυνή* as a female individual who is married (or has reached the appropriate age of marriage), and perhaps also a mother (or has reached the age to give birth to children in marriage), readers gain a deeper understanding complete regarding its basic definition, which includes more than just status as a wife (Perry, 2019, p. 13).

Hendriksen and Kistemaker (2002) translated the sentence like this: "Women should adorn themselves with beautiful clothes." Paul is not commanding women to wear boring clothes. In fact, he shows that it is not a problem for a woman to look attractive. Paul insisted that women's clothing should not be seductive or showy. Paul is not suggesting that a Christian woman should be guided by society's judgment about what clothing is considered honorable (Rom. 12:2), but Paul is indicating that a Christian woman should not wear anything that society considers ugly. In this case, he must have a respectful attitude towards conventions. The city of Ephesus had many prostitutes whose appearance was impudent and seductive. Christian women should not dress like "street women" (Wicaksono, 2020, p. 72). 1 Timothy 2:9 (and the Septuagint version of Isaiah 61:3) mentions the words "*καταστολή*", which can refer to clothing and/or the way one is dressed. However, in the context and translations of ten secular sources, it highlights behavioral qualities associated with self-control and/or a quiet nature associated with virtue. the author explores these characteristics by asking the question of how the range of meaning of the word "*καταστολή*" to the early second century AD may influence the interpretation of its use, especially in 1 Timothy 2:9 (Veasey, 2023).

In verse 10, it is said that women should be able to dress up with good deeds like women who worship, women must be silent, accept the teachings obediently. This advice

was conveyed by Paul to women, which is the same as the previous verse. At that time, women were under the influence of ancient feminist culture, they were also influenced by the way Roman women dressed, including even prostitutes at that time (Hasibuan, 2023, pp. 89–106). Women must dress up in good manners so that they are beautiful to look at, based on the way and attitude women should act. A woman must appear polite, not excessive and not cross her limits. Women must behave like a woman who has simplicity and wisdom. Because women at that time dressed too flashy, jewellery was very excessive. Women are becoming more free to the point that they were not controlled in their relationships and ultimately became unfaithful to their husbands (Palma, 2023, p. 7). So it can be said, a woman's beauty is not based on her appearance, appearance, but based on good actions towards herself and others. Thus, behaviour like this can be called worthy for women to worship before God (Arichea & Hatton, 2004).

Apart from that, in 1 Timothy 2:9-10, Paul also discusses the behaviour of women which shows that they also participate in group prayer. In the past, in some communities, it was not common for men and women to worship together, so this could cause tension. Perhaps because of this, Paul felt the need to give specific instructions to both groups: men were given instructions on how to pray, while women were given instructions on how to dress. In both cases, Paul was more concerned about the inner person, and thus, in both cases, Paul provides apostolic rules of behaviour for the gathered congregation, especially when they pray together in congregational prayer, which applies to everyone (Van Houwelingen, 2019, p. 163).

1 Timothy 2:11-12 - Paul did not Allow Women to Rule, Speak, and Teach?

Why does Paul say that a woman must be silent and obedient, in verse 11? Because this was based on the situation at that time, where there were many false teachings spread by women. So that this happen, Paul did not/advises that a woman must remain silent and accept the teachings obediently. The attitude expected by Paul is one that is obedient and not commanding. In verse 12, the function that Paul does not allow for a woman is teaching and ruling, because for Paul that function is for men. Women remaining silent is a necessity because it is based on Jewish customs themselves. Speaking to women in congregational worship is not polite, this is also confirmed in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 (Budiman, 2016, p. 23).

The repeated preposition (*ἐν*) is used as a dative indicating the way in which women are allowed to study in serenity and submission. The author uses two related words to emphasize this way of learning, namely *ἡσυχία* (noun, dative, feminine singular), which is used as a respectful dative, along with *πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ* which indicates the conditions in which women have to learn; that is, keeping the peace: the state of being without disturbance; and *ὑποταγῇ*: submission (Danker, 2009, p. 336). In the phrase *ἐν ἡσυχία*, Mounce and Metzger (2000, p. 118) argue that the word *ἡσυχία* should be

understood differently against the background of the situation of women in Ephesus. Some women there are characterized as those who like to go out of the house, go from one house to another, get involved in gossip, and generally like to get involved in things. The term *ἥσυχία*, which is translated as "silence", can vary from absolute stillness to inner calm associated with some speech activity. Therefore, understanding will be determined by the context. Towner (2021, p. 214) highlights two elements in this context: the first is the immediate context of "in tranquillity" indicating appropriate attitudes and respect for the teacher. The second is the social context.

Verse 11 focuses on correcting women's own behaviour, while the instructions given in verse 12 are aimed at regulating their activities in spreading and defending false teachings, which can cause disturbances.

The church must be a place where all people, including women, feel valued, respected, and given the opportunity to use their talents and gifts to serve God. Regarding the prohibition of speaking, teaching, and commanding men. The correct translation for these three commandments refers to the direction to women to study in silence, not to teach because the Jewish duty of stewardship is a man's duty. The prohibition on women's leadership in this text is intended to limit the attitudes, behaviour and words of women in worship for orderly worship (Hasibuan, 2023).

Open and honest dialogue and discussion between theologians, pastors and lay people is needed to understand the meaning and application of 1 Timothy 2:11-12 contextually and in accordance with the spirit of the Bible as a whole, namely love, justice and equality. These verses (1 Timothy 2:11-12) are often used to support the view that women should not teach or have authority over men in the church. The reason is based on the order of creation (Adam first, Eve later) and the fall of humans (Eve was deceived by the serpent, Adam was not). But this is a common error found as a result of literal interpretation.

1 Timothy 2:13-14 - Paul's Reasons for Giving Advice

What is the main reason why women appear inferior? Because based on Jewish customs, it is true that women were looked down upon. But apart from that, there was actually a connection with the feminist movement at that time, so Paul correlated this to show them that initially, this was the law, women were tempted and attracted to their husbands based on the book of Genesis. This means that he does not subjugate women, but rather expresses his opinion in accordance with the facts of God's word so that the threat from the feminist movement did not make them misled by teachings from outside that tried to control men at that time. So, women must do things in such a way, because God does not want discrimination, the feminist movement is a form of discriminating against men. Meanwhile, Paul's goal was to create a good balance between men and women in the Christian congregation at that time. If you pay attention, it would not be

appropriate to now use the verses in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 to discredit women. Paul himself taught as a right of his apostleship, that through the intercession of Christ man was reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:18) and Christ had redeemed man from the curse of sin (Gal. 3:13), also from the curse that befell Eve and made women dominated by men in Gen. 3:16 (Budiman, 2016, p. 24).

Hendricksen (2002) said that the fall of humans in the Old Testament was caused by women who tried to use male authority and lead them to destruction (N. Surbakti & Haloho, 2020, p. 98). In line with this, when the feminist movement occurred and the introduction of heretical teachings, Paul used arguments by taking quotations from the OT to explain that leadership and the right to teach and rule belonged to men.

Tonkin (2017) states that there is a possible contradiction in Paul's statements in his teaching when comparing this passage with the passage found in 1 Corinthians 11. In essence, he highlights the issue that in both 1 Timothy 2:13-14 and 1 Corinthians 11:8-9, Paul uses the same creationist arguments to support both sides of the debate. In 1 Timothy 2:13-14, Paul states that women should not have authority over men because women come from men, while in 1 Corinthians 11:8-9, Paul emphasizes the interdependence that men have with women and vice versa. Additionally, in 1 Corinthians 11:10-11, Paul states that "Therefore women must have a symbol of authority on their heads because of the angels, but in God, this does not happen that women depend on men and neither -Men are not dependent on women." He suggested that perhaps because Eve was deceived due to her lack of knowledge about deception, because she did not receive a direct command from God like Adam, there may be similarities between women with a lower level of education than men (Tonkin, 2017, p. 10).

From this description, it can be concluded that the text (verses 13-14) is not about the subordination of women, but about maintaining order in the church. Paul points out that Paul gives similar instructions to men and women in his other letters, and that he emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and submission to one another in Christ.

1 Timothy 2:15 - Safety for Women

In this verse it is clear that Paul does not place a woman under the curse of sin. He said, quoting from the OT, that a woman would be saved. However, salvation will be active if one lives persistently in faith, love and holiness. He emphasized holiness because there were women who did not persevere in the path of salvation. Paul juxtaposes faith and love because they are a close unity. The word sanctification is also closely related to faith. This applies not only to women but to men too. There are Gnostic-Jewish teachings, that forbid marriage and view married life as lowly (1 Timothy 4:3). Therefore in verse 15, Paul shows that because of giving birth to children or also while giving birth to children. This is not a requirement for women's safety, but it is normal (Budiman, 2016, p. 25).

1 Timothy 2:11-15 does not discourage godly women from teaching, preaching, or preaching with authority, or even leading, but encourages them to be in obedience to their husbands within a framework of mutual marital submission. "Using God's Word well" (2 Timothy 2:15) has nothing to do with accepting or following the misogynistic traditions of ancient Greek culture or the erroneous reasoning of the medieval church. This also does not mean forcing God's Word to conform to our current cultural norms. By comparing verse with verse and part with part, we can find that God's Word can be interpreted carefully and wisely (Christian, 2021, p. 24). First, the context of the entire letter shows that the paragraph describes a situation of public worship. The use of the conjunction $\tilde{\omega}\nu$ in verse 8 indicates that the prayer context, primarily discussed in 2:1-7, continues into 2:8-15. The prayer situation in the general assembly that begins in 2:8 is continued through the adverb $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ in 2:9. Second, Paul advises men and women to live a life in accordance with the calling of new people, both before and after prayer (Cho, 2020, p. 543).

So far for the thought process of the text. Due to the vague prohibitions, lack of clear distinctions, and absence of absolute statements on this topic in Paul's letters (and others), as well as other references to women in early Christian communities and arguments with the first chapters of the Bible beyond their own intention to forbid it, this makes it necessary to look for possible explanations of these requests in the remainder of the letter or the social and cultural context of society at the time (see overview below). However, the train of thought in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 makes no direct reference to the false teachings in Ephesus or other questionable currents in society. Whether all women were considered or only married women cannot be determined with certainty. The reference to childbearing in verse 15 suggests the latter possibility (Stenschke, 2019, p. 6). By implication, that women will receive "salvation" actually emphasizes the "fall" aspect. The woman Paul wants is to be able to avoid committing violations, as Eve had (Hensley, 2020, p. 57).

This verse encourages us to evaluate gender roles in the light of the Bible. The Bible clearly states that men and women are both created in the image of God and have equal value. We must avoid interpretations that belittle or demean women, and instead, promote equality and mutual respect in relations between genders.

Paul's Apostleship and The Position of Women in Worship Services

In 1 Timothy 2:8-15, Paul, as an apostle, instructs Timothy on guiding the congregation. Both men and women are advised equally by Paul: men to pray with holy hands, without anger or disputes, and women to remain silent, obediently accepting teachings without teaching or having authority over men. Some interpreters suggest that Paul addresses an ancient women's movement in Ephesus, emphasizing submissive behaviour for women in worship, without assuming authority over men.

Paul emphasized the importance of women's silence and obedient acceptance of teachings, not to oppress them but to cultivate healthy worship. His use of apostolic rights

aimed to build up, not discredit, women. In verses 9-15, Paul's concern for women's well-being is evident. These rights, related to matters of faith and truth, underscore his leadership over the congregation he established. They are employed to regulate and guide the congregation (Budiman, 2016, p. 22). Paul wrote letters to certain congregations or people, mostly using the word Apostle of Christ; this term appears in almost all of his letters. This shows that the rights of an apostle have a special place in his letter. Giving indicates that he used this right to regulate, guide, explain things, direct, and give advice, he even used it as a medium that he received a special assignment from Christ and was specially chosen (Galatians 1:17). Then, he used his apostolic rights to oppose various parties who opposed his apostolate (Damarwanti, 2020, p. 101).

1 Timothy 2:8-15 guides the roles and authority of men and women in the congregation. Although some aspects of Paul's teachings need to be interpreted with caution in a modern-day context, his key messages about equality in salvation, the importance of modesty and chastity, and cooperation and mutual respect between men and women remain relevant for today's church.

When looking at the text of 1 Timothy 2:9-15, women have a special place in Paul's eyes. It can be seen that Paul was very concerned about the position of women. Even though the text seems to subjugate women, this is not the case. Paul cared about the women in Ephesus. The main reason why Paul wanted women to submit to men was because of the feminist movement and heretical teachings and the lifestyle of women in Ephesus was greatly influenced by the habits of some women in the city related to prostitution. The city of Ephesus was famous as a city of religious prostitution. The attitude of women in congregational worship in Ephesus received a spiritual touch from Paul. Researchers see that what Paul did for women was a form of love and concern for them, even though there was resistance to the feminist movement. Apart from that, the church in Ephesus was the result of the preaching of the Gospel. Paul cared about the congregation, by organizing and arranging it in such a way. Even though the patriarchal system is dominant, Paul does not use this cultural system, he uses the term I want, this expression is based on his will because he is an Apostle of Christ. Paul explicitly defends women. Many women had very specific positions, such as Lydia (Acts 16: 14, 40), Priscilla (Acts 18:18), and Syntyche (Philippians 4:2). They were even appointed deacons. Women's participation in spreading the Gospel and praying in congregations was indeed widespread at that time (Surya, 2020, pp. 86–87).

Departing from these stories, Paul indeed places women in a sense of urgency. When an apostle entrusted something to women, it showed something special to them, even though patriarchal culture had a huge influence. However, Paul still cared about a woman, in this case those in Ephesus (White, 2022).

In this chapter, Paul states that women should not teach and should rather remain silent. He shows that this view is related to the patriarchal cultural context of his time. Paul's goal was to prevent women from getting involved in the false teachings of that

time. This teaching is aimed at women who are involved in heresy or heresy, and who have abused their power in the context of the church. Therefore, Paul states that this is not universally true. From this analysis, the author concludes that women can also play a role in God's service because service is not the exclusive right of men. Women are also called to serve God in the same capacity. This is not related to gender, because in God's eyes, men and women have the same value. Therefore, using it as an excuse to limit women's participation in ministry both in the church and in society is not appropriate (Limbong, 2018, p. 1).

Theological Reflection

The story in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 is a historical concern. The concern that Paul shows is the reason for the decline of women's morality due to the influence of heretical teachings and the rise of hedonistic feminism which advocates living in excessive luxury and living in religious prostitution. Through Paul's apostolic rights and the urgency of the position of women, it is now necessary to see the reality as a reflection.

When we look at the current state of the congregation or church, we can see that now the urgency for the position of women is clear and being paid attention to. For example, in worship, a woman is permitted to speak, teach (eg: Sunday school), express opinions and rule as head of a particular congregation. Not hindered by certain cultural systems. Women or girls are now in an equal position in the congregation. It can be seen that it seems that patriarchal culture is no longer patriarchal but in life, both men and women each have a role. An example of a church whose leadership or church position is held by women is GBIB, in the decision of session XV (15) 1990 it was emphasized that they only use the term pastor, no longer male or female pastors, according to them they are the same. So until now, they allow women to lead the church or be actively involved in ministry as pastors (Romeantenan & Sianipar, 2018, p. 143). As criticism and solutions from researchers for the church today. The researcher's criticism is that the church should not limit women in ministry or involvement in church organizations, because the Bible does not discredit women. The solution that the church needs to pay attention to at this time is to interpret the Bible as a whole and not lock in certain verses or only look at the outer shell. The church must study the Bible, and pay attention to feminists as Christ also helped and cared for women and Paul prioritized them in the study of 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

The BNKP Church is one of the church denominations that accepts the ordination of female pastors and recognizes them as equal ministers with male pastors. In the last ten years, the number of female pastors in BNKP has experienced significant growth. According to data from the Secretariat of the BNKP Synod Office in 2021, of the 601 pastors at BNKP, 300 of them are female pastors, while 301 are male. Some congregations in BNKP prefer female pastors because they are considered more diligent, thorough, and patient (Dachi & Manao, 2021, p. 28).

In today's life, as a secular theological reflection of 1 Timothy 2:8-15, Paul's apostolic rights and the urgency of women's position are the government's efforts to eradicate prostitution and provide jobs for commercial sex workers. The government is making efforts to rehabilitate commercial sex workers or prostitution. Indeed, Indonesia is a country that implements a quasi-legalized system, which legalizes prostitution (Rusyidi & Nurwati, 2019, p. 308). However, in the end, this became a special concern for the government to carry out various prevention efforts. Treatment in Indonesia specifically for commercial sex workers is called "Rehabilitation and Resocialization".

Rehabilitation is prepared for those who want to leave the profession, they are prepared to live in a hostel for three to six months to receive training for them. The rehabilitation system is spread across Indonesia, such as in Social Work Centers or Women's Institutions (North Sumatera, NTB, etc.), and is always identified with women; Indonesians are always trapped in thinking that prostitution is only women, but in fact both genders are involved (D. P. Surbakti et al., 2020, p. 118).

By providing this place, it can be seen how the government is taking firm and serious steps towards this problem. The steps taken by the government are a form of great attention and are specifically for women. Even the secular world must treat women as men treat themselves, or must treat women as equals to men. The government must really look at the oppression or alienation of women, in this case they are often raped, discriminated against and dominate them. It needs to be seen that men without women will have no offspring to reproduce. The needs of women who are widowed and have no work need to be seen and given assistance. And it would also be best if necessary to state that prostitution is legal in state life, not just religion which prohibits it.

These verses highlight the importance of achieving a balance between leadership and obedience among congregation members. Today's churches need to prioritize these principles in the process of selecting and training church leaders, as well as in teaching the value of obedience in community settings. This article also emphasizes the importance of prayer and knowledge in the spiritual life of the congregation. The modern church is reminded to place prayer as a central part of individual and collective spiritual life, while continuing to pursue a deeper knowledge of God's Word. This section emphasizes the importance of the example set by all members of the congregation, especially church leaders. Today's churches must pay special attention to the character and integrity of their leaders, and strive to maintain high moral standards among all members of the congregation.

CONCLUSION

From the beginning, God made humans, male and female. He made them both alike in the image of God. God created both of them not to discredit or subjugate each other. God placed women beside men to help him. Men need women and women also

vice versa. Tradition sets humans apart in degrees and not God, nor does the Bible ever discredit women. Patriarchal traditions place women under men. However, this is not the case for Paul, who even though patriarchal culture is still strong, still does not use it to degrade women. It can be seen that he cared about the women in Ephesus. He prioritized the position of women. Although all the orders he gave Timothy to shepherd men and women were his right as an apostle, they were not based on patriarchal traditions. Everything he conveys in verses 8-15 is a form of resistance to Gnostic-Jewish teachings and the feminist movement on the part of Artemis worshipers. Gnostic teachings advised them not to marry. Meanwhile, Artemis worshipers advocate a hedonistic life, living in prostitution, impurity, etc. Because of all this, Paul arranged the life of the congregation in Ephesus in such a way as to be worthy of worshipping Christians.

So, with Paul's apostolic privilege, he uses it to show that he is not discrediting women, he is showing that he has concern for them. With this apostolic right, he directed women who were under the control of heretical teachings. For men he recommends raising holy hands to pray, it must stand pure and earnest before God. The more rules and orders for the good show that they care about them. What he built was not allowed to collapse. Through the problems in Ephesus, it is now necessary to see the connection with the current context.

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